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Perspectives of Human Rights and Gender: An Experience of Social Work Intervention

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to discourse the intervention of professional social work and to realize the need of such working strategy in the most unprivileged community in Maharashtra.

Keywords: *Dombari - Nomadic Tribes*

Introduction:

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing the cumulative socio economic, education and political disadvantages faced by them. Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before the law and equal protection of law; prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantee equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(b), 39(c) and 42 of the Constitution are of specific importance in this regard.

India is ranked 105 amongst 128 countries in its Education for All Development Index. Among SAARC nations, India stands third behind Sri Lanka, and Maldives. India still has one of the lowest female literacy rate in Asia. As per the India's last census in 2011, the female literacy stands at 65.46% compared to 82.14% of males. estimates show that for every 100 girls in rural India only a single one reaches class 12 and almost 40% of girls leave school even before reaching the fifth standard

The latest ASER report 2016 point out the school dropout rate in Maharashtra. Maharashtra always boasts on for its rationality and advancement in developmental issues in comparison to other states in India. Gender based data shows that near about six per cent of girls still not enrolled in the school. The girls and boys at the age of adolescence is highest in number 17.3 %.

This paper is an attempt to discourse the intervention of professional social work and to realize the need of such working strategy in the most unprivileged community in Maharashtra.

As per the objectives framed to work in the different fields of social work, college decided to select four villages where students would get adequate opportunity to learn basic skills and would help to develop professional attitude of social work. Thus the four villages Dhavdi, SungaonUmbrai and Satefal were selected and did the procedure with the concerned gram panchayat. Only one in every three girls in India completes school education age-appropriately (U-DISE 2016-17).

Dhavdi village situated at Northwest side of the Ambajogai Block. It is fifteen k m away from Ambajogai and scattered habitat in different parts in small hamlets grouping ten to fifteen families resided over there. There are four marginal communities resided that are Dombari Community that comes under primitive Nomadic tribes. The Girivasti which is also a community had the traditional occupation was procuring alms on behalf of religious performing customs. The other community was Banjara which habitat isolate by identifying traditional symbols and customs.

Identifying the Problems:

Students commenced the intervention of social work by the prescribed procedure of meeting head of the village council Sarpanch, village revenue secretary and other stake holders respectively. It helped to understand the socio-cultural factors and the demographic status of the village. Beside that a survey was conducted in few visits which focused the health condition, employment and education.

The data analysis of the survey brought out many issues related to the health, education and the employment sectors. People specifically women had lot of issues connected to that.

Dombari community a nomadic tribe community, a very strong among the custom values and the primitive occupation of having entertaining society by performing athletics such as walking on the rope etc. in the course of modernization the community escaped its tradition and switched to seek other way of earning source. In the close out set of cultural tradition they found manual hard work in agriculture field like other nomadic tribes.

Community based dispute Resolve System:

It was noticed that the Dombari community was very rigid in regard with following developmental ways. Village has permitted to acquire a land outside the village without allotting it on the names of community or person either. They were living there on the mercy of the villagers. The Dombari families didn't have constructed home instead they were living in the huts. The leader of the Dombari community would perform the role of magistrate at the time of community internal disputes to resolve under traditional value system called 'JatPanchayat'. At present he said to accept the judicial system and take help of court. In spite of that his overall influence on people was seen at large context.

Illiteracy and school dropout:

Dombari community is a very close kin caste culture group and dominant patriarchal pursuit. Not a single married woman has seen a door of school. Illiteracy was 100 per cent noticed. Percentage of school dropout was very high. Among thirty two children of six to eighteen age groups, adolescents were more out of school. Only one girl was seen pursuing education after matriculation. After Diwali vacation most of the children would go to sugar cutting with their parents to distanced sugar factories. These Children would make great help to the mothers having babies to take care while cane cutting. The other reason was that all families migrate to sugar factories leaving nobody to look after these children.

Rest of the Dhavdi community people were not aware of the schemes and the programmes for them. They didn't have the proper information regarding the capacities of village level councils and its administration. No gramsabha were conducted for women ever. The issues of water scarcity and the employment were pinpointed. The schemes like employment generation were not properly implemented.

Framing Objectives:

After the discussion with villagers, observation and the demographic information, the we located were above mentioned. Moreover the long term objectives were framed as

- To create awareness regarding the role of local governance in engaging people to meet the needs of the community
- To provide assistance for the basic educational skills and among the Dombari community
- To coordinate support of the government machinery to resolve health, education and employment issues

Strategic intervention:

At the end of data analyses, strategies were discussed to get cooperation, participation and initiate leadership through common people. The strategies were designed as

- Collaboration with the local authorities and stake holders
- Education and awareness
- Use of techniques and means to deal with the issue.
- Rapport Building

First fifteen visits were concentrated on introduction, understanding the community and the needs that they uphold. It was noticed that the Dombari community had issues that should have addressed immediately. People in that community were not involved in the social life. They remained isolated and prohibited to participate in the village level public functions. Hence community had very little assimilation of the general social change over the years. Health of the family members was commonly ignored. Illness would be considered as the sin or anger of Goddess. Superstition would

play major role in the life of individuals. Cleanliness in the house and outside, health issues and its impact were overseen.

In this regard health camp and guidance of doctors were arranged. 116 people were treated with medication and follow up. Sarpanch and the Gramsevak helped to organize the camp. They made available the hall and talked with peoples to trust on medicine. There were many little children identified who were needed medication. Students took follow up of the patients treated in the camp. It was an attempt to restore faith on science and medicine.

School Attainment:

Illiteracy in Dombari community was very high and those who were enrolled in the nearby school did not attend it regularly. Such children were made a group and were in touch to persuade them the importance of the schooling. Teachers were talked regarding the attainment of these children.

In the group counseling of the children, it was revealed that students of village community hesitate to make friendship with Dombari children. They would avoid to seat beside them in the class. This challenge was met through innovative games and skill labs that would built up a strong friendship among them.(photo) This initiative helped and discriminating practices stopped .

In the harvesting period parents were persuaded to keep their children at village and a woman from the same community got ready to stay with those children.It helped to avoid irregularity in attending the school. Despite repeated follow up to school administration, school of Dhavdi could not run a seasonal hostel for these poor children. Sometime children would manage to work on wages on holidays and assist their aunt and sister organizing food for them.

Distance Education to women:

An idea of weekly school for women was implemented. Ten women admitted to join class to learn writing and reading skills when they were brought to understand the advantages of learning skills. With the help of an NGO, slates and a black board was arranged. Thus the class for women started. Women would join class in the noon after finishing their daily wage work. Almost all learnt to write their names and read alphabets somehow. The classes ended up by the time of Diwali holidays. These were three major activates carried only for the Dombari community.

Gramsabha a means to address community issues:

Survey analysis had identified the issues which were resulted due to the disfunctioning of the administration and the inadequate knowledge of the people's rights. People were unaware about the procedure to village councils and its responsibilities. Especially women never did attended community meeting a gram sabha and its significance to resolve problems of community. By considering this, a street play was organized in public places concentrating on women. MSW students would play thestreet play and after that talk with people. In the meanwhile women asked the

Sarpanch to organize women gram sabha. The newly joined revenue officer gram sevak supported and planned a day for the sabha. Women from all the areas of the village were contacted and asked to participate in the sabha and put questions before. More than hundred women attended sabha and asked many questions. It lead to have survey of families to identify beneficiaries for Awas (house) scheme. Date was fixed in the meeting; the issue of write to work was also raised by the women. Gramsevak informed them about the MGNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guaranty Scheme).

Gram sabha gave women energy, They took initiative to cooperate in the govt.led survey. Women who were working in the unorganized sector demanded job cards to the Rojgarsevak. When he hesitated to give them work as per the legislation. They wrote an application to Block development officer and demanded work.

Thus the realization of needs, strengths, rights to the people with effective feeling of association can improve the condition of society. Consistency and coordination in dealing with the social issues are one of the challenges that social work come across.

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